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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/600,131	06/19/2003	Donald G. Hervey	6229	8950

7590

07/06/2004

D. Neil LaHaye
Patent Department
J. Ray McDermott, S.A.
757 N. Eldridge Pkwy.
Houston, TX 77079

EXAMINER

BEACH, THOMAS A

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3671

DATE MAILED: 07/06/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/600,131

Applicant(s)

HERVEY ET AL.

Examiner

Thomas A Beach

Art Unit

3671

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-8 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-8 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 19 June 2003 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1. The drawings filed on 06/19/03 are acceptable subject to correction of the informalities:

Figures 1-9 contain hand drawn reference numerals (not plain and legible) and poor line quality; lines numbers & letter are not uniformly thick and well defined, clean, durable and black.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 1-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Thomas 6,347,912. Thomas shows a floating offshore structure having a center well 16 and cylinder-stem assembly received supporting a riser, having the center well gap controlling interface guide, cylinder 28 attached to the longitudinal upper portion (relative terminology in which figure 1 can be considered to show the upper portion due to the broken line marks of elements 26 and 24) of the riser 24, a wear strip 42 (at least 3; claims 6 & 7) mounted on the exterior circumference (figure 3) and positioned an angle relative to tangent to the exterior said cylinder (since no specific position at which the tangent is taken has been claim and the wear surface of 42, the thickness side, is considered to be at 90 degrees to the tangent at 38); and also the mating guide 44

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mounted the center well of the floating offshore structure center well of the floating offshore structure and at an elevation such that for all vertical positions of the cylinder-stem assembly there sufficient area interface with said longitudinal wear strip (figure 2).

As concerns claims 2 and 8, Thomas shows a wear stop 60 attached to said mating guide and facing said wear strip.

As concerns claims 3-4, Thomas shows mating guide 44 is non-compliant and compliant (due to the nature of the material and relativeness of the term compliant).

As concerns claim 5, Thomas shows at least three sets said wear strips and mating guides are spaced around the circumference of said cylinder (figure 3).

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thomas A Beach whose telephone number is 703.305.4848. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday, 8:00am-6:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Thomas Will can be reached on 703.308.3870. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703.872.9306 or

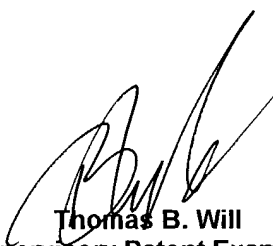
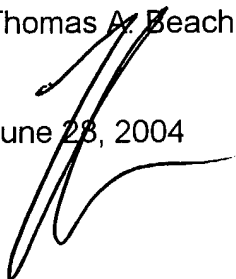
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703.872.9306 for regular communications and 703.872.9306 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703.306.4198.

Thomas A. Beach

June 28, 2004



Thomas B. Will
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Group 3600